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7 January 1977

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IC STAFF EVALUATION OF ESTIMATES OF THE
SOVIET MILITARY THREAT

Purposes of Evaluation

- To address those aspects of the NIE 11-3/8 competitive analysis which relate to evaluation and improvement of Community performance.
- To evaluate the adequacy of Community organization, procedures, resources, data bases, methodology and trained analysts as they pertain to the more general subject of estimates of the Soviet nuclear and conventional military threats.

Timing

Phase 1 of the project will produce a short report for the new DCI, on or about January 20. This report will provide independent IC Staff assurances that:

- The estimative process is basically sound and has not been stamped by outside pressures. ✓
- Where problems exist in intelligence estimates, either the Community is moving to correct these problems or the DCI's corrective mechanisms (e.g., the IC Staff, the NIOs) are on top of the problems and will recommend corrective actions.

Phase 2 of the project will examine in greater detail those problems identified in Phase 1, with particular emphasis on determining the need for changes in estimating procedures, presentation and methodologies, more manpower and fiscal resources devoted to "soft data" on the Soviet threat (e.g., doctrine, open sources, analysis of Soviet objectives), and revised policies for recruiting and training Soviet analysts. We intend to complete Phase I in the Spring, so the report can be available for use in the second semi-annual NSC review and the CFI program review, as appropriate.

Relation of IC Staff Project to NIO and CIA Responses to Team B Report

The IC Staff project will provide the DCI an independent judgment about the implications of the Team B report. Also,

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it covers aspects of estimating issues which are not being addressed by the NIOs or CIA, viz., the Soviet general forces threat and systemic Community problems of resources, data, or manpower which may relate to the quality of estimates.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: D/DCI/NI
FROM : NIO/SP
SUBJECT : Talking Points for D/DCI/NI Meeting
with DCI on B Team Problem

1. Increasingly obvious that we need a responsible and persuasive response to the criticisms and recommendations raised in the report of the B Team on Soviet objectives as soon as possible -- certainly no later than end of January.

2. Purpose of this meeting, as I see it, is to make sure we both understand and are in agreement on what is being done and how the various segments fit together. The lineup as I understand it is as follows:

- a. On the B Team recommendations, my office is working with the people concerned in DDI and the IC Staff to prepare a coordinated response which the Director will be able to pass on to PFIAB (or its successor) with his comments. This is a relatively low key, immediate response.
- b. On the B team report DDI components (primarily OSR) are preparing detailed, comprehensive comments, for completion by the end of January.
- c. In addition, my office is preparing a briefer, more pointed response to the key questions raised by the B Team report, particularly as they relate to the NIE process.

- Drafting being done by [] a 25X1
recent retiree who worked on the "track
record" study last year and is thoroughly
familiar with the NIE process.

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- d. Finally, IC Staff is quite properly starting up a broader, more fundamental evaluation of the process by which the military national intelligence estimates are produced, taking account not only of the B Team comments but such broad issues as the desirability of continuing the annual estimative cycle, the coordination process and the role of the services.

3. I had frankly hoped that we could pool forces to concentrate more on one thing at a time.

-- I think there would have been advantages in having a joint CIA-NIO "A Team response" to the B Team or in delaying any formal NIO input until the CIA participants had finished their basic analysis.

-- I expect that those working on the IC Staff study will want a better idea of how the Carter people view their requirements for national security intelligence before they complete their work.

-- But there is no denying that the CIA has a right and responsibility to prepare its own comments, or that both the NIO and CIA should have their comments in hand as soon as possible to meet Administration and Congressional inquiries.

-- Hence we will plan to work in parallel, each seeking to meet an end-January target date.

-- Hope those concerned can work together and avoid any inadvertent or unnecessary differences.

4. At a meeting Stoertz and [] held with Stevens, 25X1 Graybeal and [] yesterday, there was general support 25X1 for the idea of soliciting the views of other NFIB agencies as part of the NIO response.

-- When completed, this response would thus fulfill the commitment to comment on the B Team report which would have been accomplished by an A Team if there was in fact any A Team whose responsibilities covered the full range of present and past estimates to which the B Team on Soviet objectives addressed itself.

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-- Given the complicated and controversial character of the problem, I believe that we are not likely to get very useful contributions by requesting NFIB comments or contributions at this time, but would do better by firming up what we regard as a reasonable and persuasive response to the B Team report and then seeking NFIB reactions to it in draft.

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